Sapphire and Steel

Series Four
consisting of four half-hour episodes

FROM ITC ENTERTAINMENT
AN ACC COMPANY

ITC Entertainment presents:—

"SAPPHIRE AND STEEL"

(Series Four, consisting of four half-hour episodes).

* * *

An eerie new investigation by the agents of another dimension, assigned to prevent Time breaking through into the Present, covers four half-hour episodes in the fourth "SAPPHIRE AND STEEL" series, starring David McCallum and Joanna Lumley, produced by Shaun O'Riordan, directed by David Foster and written by P.J. Hammond.

The world of photography provides the background.

The setting is an old house containing what appears to be a lost property shop, a photographic workroom and an attic flat. Time has broken through, in the form of a strange shape, via an old photograph in which it has been trapped since the first days of photography — released when the landlord, a photographic enthusiast, carries out experiments.

They are dangerous experiments. The landlord and one of the two girls living in the attic flat have disappeared from the face of the earth — physically, at any rate. They've been trapped in one of the old pictures. And Sapphire and Steel themselves, in the course of their investigations, deliberately become part of a photograph, taking two-dimensional form.

Photography is not the only keynote of the series. The trick photographic effects provide impelling interest, and most of the characters are in sepia.

The cast is a taut one. Besides Joanna Lumley as Sapphire (still performing amazing things when her eyes turn blue) and David McCallum as Steel, there are Alison Spiro as the girl upstairs who is puzzled by the disappearance of her flat-mate and Natalie Hodges as a young girl with a parasol who emerges from one of the photographs and indulges in some unexpected activities. The "thing", referred to as Shape, is dual-faced and is therefore portrayed by two actors, Philip Bird and Bob Hornery. There are also 14 sepia-faced children who return to physical existence from photographs.

"SAPPHIRE AND STEEL" is an ATV production, distributed by ITC Entertainment.

SYNOPSIS

Is Time trying to break through via old photographs? Sapphire and Steel begin a new investigation and probe the secrets of an old shop in which nothing is new. A shop that never opens. And they see children from the past .... children who are neither real nor images but something in between.

* * *

The framed photograph hangs in a photographic workroom. The picture is of a London street, period about 1890. Four children are standing by a stone water trough. On the right of the frame, a woman.

The sound of children's voices can be heard. They are chanting the old street game rhyme: "See-saw, sacradown. Which is the way to London town?" The small figures are now missing from the picture. As they play their game, they move down an alleyway and into a building.

In the alleyway, Sapphire and Steel are watching and waiting. They move to the house, puzzled at seeing a light on the top floor. Sapphire thinks she has seen the children, but she is puzzled. She doesn't believe they were real; but she doesn't think they were images, either. Something in between.

Inside the building, they find what appears to be a lost property shop. There is nothing new in it. Steel is convinced that Time has broken through here, and Sapphire agrees. Suddenly, she is concious of a small child's face in sepia, but when she moves to the spot it is not where it should have been. Steel cannot see anything, though; neither is he concious of the child's chanting voice that Sapphire can hear.

Sapphire sees the child again, this time more clearly, when she walks to a dark corner. It is a child of about eight, wearing clothes that might be of the 1906 period, and she has a parasol in her hands, as if posing for a photograph. She is smiling, but there is a hint of cruelty in the smile. Then turmoil. Umbrellas that fill the dark corner seem to come to life and Sapphire is trapped in the middle of them. Her cry for help brings Steel to her side, and then everything appears to be two-dimensional, like a photograph. The child can be heard singing, and then Sapphire and Steel become three-dimensional again.

They realise they have been caught in the time break, and as Steel stares at some old pictures, one with a bearded man staring down, he guesses that Time has broken its way through photographs.

They make their way upstairs and find a room filled with books on photography and unopened letters to a Mr. H. Williamson. A photographic workroom is filled with old photographs - but four children are missing from each of them.

In the attic, they come across a brassy young woman whose name, they learn, is Liz. She lives there with a girl companion who has been away for some time. She tells them that the old landlord has left, but the new landlord has never bothered her and all he talks about is his children. Asked what he looks like, Liz is perplexed, realising that she has never seen his face.

Outside, a man is approaching the house, children milling around him. He has no face.....

* * *

The Cast:-

Steel:	DAVID McCALLUM
Sapphire:	JOANNA LUMLEY
Liz:	ALYSON SPIRO
Shape:	PHILIP BIRD and BOB HORNERY
Child with Parasol:	NATALIE HEDGES.

Producer:	SHAUN O'RIORDAN
Director:	DAVID FOSTER
Writer:	P.J. HAMMOND

An ATV Network production, distributed by ITC Entertainment.

* * *

SYNOPSIS

Sapphire and Steel make the eerie discovery that the mysterious power representing Time must have slipped in when the first-ever photographs were taken and remained trapped in old photographs .... now two people have also become trapped.

* * *

The man without a face listens silently as Sapphire and Steel fire questions at Liz, the occupant of the attic flat in the old house. Joining them in the photographic workroom, Liz looks at old photographs which she says were not there before and explains that her former landlord, Mr. Williamson, made photography his hobby and studied new techniques.

One photograph is of particular interest to Sapphire and Steel. It is of the interior of a Victorian shop with a man in the centre leaning on the counter in an identical pose to Steel's when he and Sapphire were trapped by the umbrellas. Another picture, of a girl struggling to hold on to a black umbrella, her pose identical to Sapphire's. Seemingly, the child possessed the power that "imprisoned" them.

Sapphire and Steel warn Liz that there is something very odd about the disappearance of her flat-mate and former landlord, and she admits that the children have only been around since their disappearance .... and Sapphire realises when finding another photograph containing two people in modern dress, who certainly shouldn't have been in it, that the missing couple have been trapped.

Sapphire smashes the frame of the photograph and warns Steel to treat it carefully, otherwise the two may never be able to return. The photograph hasn't been touched for 97 years.

Sapphire senses that something has been standing on one of the stairs. There is a musty smell of dust, paper, copper and chemicals, almost like a cupboard unopened for about two hundred years. And that was about the time the first ever photograph was taken. Did something get in then and remain trapped until Williamson found it and released it? Sapphire turns back time for that particular stair and realises that the power has been trapped in every photograph ever taken, assuming any shape it chooses.

In the shop, there are fallen photographs everywhere. Sounds of children laughing can be heard as Sapphire examines a photograph of a market town on market day. The figure of a man without a face leaves the picture. Then bubbles drift in the air. Sapphire and Steel see two sepia children blowing bubbles. Then they are completely surrounded by children. The dark shadow of the "shape" approaches them from the direction of the market picture, and at the same time the girl with the parasol steps forward chanting "Which is the way to London town?" and holding her hat pin towards Sapphire's face....

* * *

SYNOPSIS

Can the two who have been trapped in old photographs be rescued? Sapphire and Steel continue their investigations into this weird mystery and Sapphire is able to communicate with one of those who have been trapped.

* * *

Sapphire puts out her hand towards the girl with the parasol. The hatpin disintegrates; it is of paper. The child screams and disappears, as do the other sepia children.

Sapphire and Steel see the figure of the "shape", but each sees a different face. They are warned that they will join the other two already trapped in a photograph, and as a large framed picture spins away from the wall Steel appears to freeze and becomes two-dimensional. Sapphire's eyes go blue and she is able to turn back time to save him.

By now the shape has gone and as they search for him he appears in different photographs.

In the attic, Liz hangs up a fallen photograph, not realising that the shape is now in it. When she goes downstairs, Sapphire and Steel show her the 97-year-old photograph and the astonished Liz is able to identify the figures of both her flat-mate Ruth and her old landlord. As Steel gets to work in the darkroom, Liz tells Sapphire that Ruth was interested in photography and used to spend hours watching Mr. Williamson at work. She was with him the night she disappeared.

In the alleyway, they find all the children huddled together, and Sapphire explains that they are ghosts .... but ghosts before before death. As Liz reaches out to comfort a crying boy, he turns into a paper cut-out and disintegrates. The girl with the parasol shrieks with laughter, then she and the other children disappear.

When they join Steel in the darkroom he displays part of the photograph that he has enlarged. It is of Ruth, and her voice is heard, trying to remember the rhyme "As I was going up the stairs, I saw a man that wasn't there...." Ruth's voice is then heard explaining how she was working with Mr. Williamson when the man "that wasn't there" first appeared. Mr. Williamson had just discovered something in his darkroom. But before she can say any more, the photograph lifts itself from the work-top and disappears. Ruth can be heard calling out in alarm.

On the landing, the shape flicks his finger. The photograph that has materialised in his hand goes up in flames.

* * *

Credits as for Episode One.

SYNOPSIS

Sapphire and Steel become part of an old photograph in their efforts to trap the Thing, the mysterious Shape, that has broken through from the past. And they find themselves trapped.

* * *

In a desperate effort to save Ruth from the burning photograph, Sapphire tries to take time back. But she is too late. Shape has claimed his victims. Neither she nor Williamson can now be rescued. But can the Thing, the mysterious Shape, be caught?

Liz is told to pack and leave, and Steel makes a close examination of the photographic workroom. Williamson's "secret" becomes clear as he finds such items as small pieces of mirror taped together, bits of film, slides, trick lenses, gelatine filters. No great photographic discovery here. Williamson had tried out a few kaleidoscope tricks, and these must have impressed Ruth. In combining two periods in his trick photographs, he hadn't realised the danger of mixing the old with the new. He had manufactured an instrument of danger, a multiplication of objects with a mirror prism acting like a funnel, syphoning the Thing that had been trapped for nearly two hundred years. He must have released it when he decided to take his apparatus apart.

Can he be sent back? Sapphire and Steel realise that the behaviour of the Parasol Girl and the other children and the nursery rhymes are keys. And they take the risk of inserting themselves into the "nursery door" photo, immediately becoming two-dimensional. Shape picks up the picture and they can hear the children chanting "That is the way to London" as they follow him into the cellar; hear the Parasol Girl laughing jubilantly as he hangs the picture on a wall.

But they are imprisoned in the picture, and the only one left to help them is Liz. She is just leaving and they try to will her to hear them. But she can hear only a faint sound, which she ignores until she is outside and sees Shape. He goes back into the house. She hesitates and then decides to return.

Sapphire and Steel are suddenly aware that Shape is staring at the picture. And then they realise that he is setting fire to the frame. He hears Liz arriving and immediately escapes into the picture. Liz stares at it, recognising the figures of Sapphire and Steel, and she is able to hear Sapphire's urgent instructions to create a mirror prism with two small framed and glassed photographs. It is a race against time. Shape's face is reflected in one of the mirrors and then vanishes.

Sapphire and Steel find themselves three-dimensional again. The way is open for them to return the photographs in the shop to their original condition. Everything becomes as it was before Shape escaped....

* * *

Credits as Episode One.